



Measure

Published by

SAINT JOSEPH'S COLLEGE
COLLEGEVILLE, INDIANA

Gerba

*Spring 1951
Volume 11
Number 2*



Measure

Saint Joseph's College
Collegeville, Indiana

Spring, 1951



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*But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
Falling like dew upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think.*

LORD BYRON



Graduation . . .

. . . is one of the few words in our language that denotes both an end and a beginning, a stop and a start, a close and an opening. It signifies the exchange of one type of life for another. Academic robes will give way to the dress of business or of a profession, and students will convert with nostalgic regret to a new and harder environment.

They will leave an atmosphere that is friendly and certain for one that may be less affable and sure. New trials will spawn in the heat and friction of a fresh, strange world. Annoying adversities will sting their hands and hearts, for such results complement inexperience. In this crescendo of complexities, youthful minds will shift through introspection back to college days. There, in a precious past, they will search for formulas to solve new problems. A particular solution may be difficult to find, but present and prevailing will be the universal formula for life.

In moments of reflection, the thought of Twin Towers will return, and with it, the recollection of walking within the shadow of God's grace. — Then, as in the past, under closed eyelids, hearts and souls can be lifted to God. With this elevation will come the awareness that the silver cord of Faith will guide, with surety, those who walk with faltering uncertainty through that perplexing array of seemingly blank tomorrows.

F. J. P.

May Evening

*Soul-slaking fragrance wisps
Through golden shafted eve.
Bushes tilt to heaven's lisps
Of joy, while green grasses grieve.*

*Lilacs, magnolias,
Gushing geysers of spry sprays
Heave high, fall short; succeeding, pass
Eternal ends, gaily find ways*

*Unknown to mortal man.
Lilies laugh, roses sigh; tulips
Twinkle and, coy, demurely fan
The heart with velvet lips.*

*Unearthly eyes light low
The royal region pale,
While gold becomes fast, slow, a glow
Of scarlet, fading out the vale.*

*Nature's beauty, man's love
Send up sighs sowing seeds
Of future glory. High above
Mary smiles softly, and man's plight pleads.*

JOHN BASSETT

The Witch of Blake's Landing

DANIEL BOYLAN

FOLKS around Blake's Landing wouldn't have much to do with old Nellie Cutchens. It used to puzzle me why they were all so afeared of her, and why they'd always move to the other side of Pa's store on the few occasions when she came in to buy some sowbelly or canned soup. If old Nellie noticed the way folks acted, she never let on; but how she could've missed it would be hard to imagine. All the kids around town were warned not to go near her shack by the lake, and the warnings stuck, 'cause not even Big Tom Holley could say what her place looked like, and Tom didn't let much get past him.

The reason folks acted the way they did was because old Nellie was supposed to be a witch. Now how or why a story like that ever got started, nobody knows. The old lady had a shack so hid in a tangle of brush and trees that you couldn't see it from the lake or from the road on the hill. It was claimed she brewed mysterious herbs there and cast spells; but since nobody in town would admit to having seen her shack or been there, I didn't see how anybody would know that. So whenever Nellie'd come in the store, I'd speak polite-like to her and wait on her. Pa'd mutter something at me after she left, but I knew that secretly he was glad I'd done it instead of him.

Well, Blake's Landing isn't much of a town when it comes to social life. If you stretch your imagination quite a piece, you might say it's a resort town, but that's a heap of stretching. The folks that come there to the lake in the summer are pretty quiet; and when they want to go to town, they just go on the five miles to Harfield,

which would make four or five of Blake's Landing. We don't mind so much, 'cause summer-folk aren't always the most desirable customers, but once in a while we can't help wishing somebody'd put a fire-cracker under Blake's Landing some time.

It was a day like that five years ago come next July, that Hank Treeweather dropped by the house after dinner. It was Sunday and hotter'n blue blazes. Pa never kept the store open on Sundays, so I didn't have much to do, 'cause that was before I started going with Emmie Lou. We fidgeted around the house for awhile, and then the Boswell sisters, Sally Ann and Melinda, came out of their house and sat down in their big porch swing. Hank and I meandered over their way, and, in no time at all, we were all four on our way to the lake for a boat-ride.

When I said it was hot that Sunday, that's just what I meant. All that week the sun had been beating down unmercifully, and every day the skies had been bright blue with nary a cloud passing over them. But by the end of the week, there was a feeling of rain in the air. Everybody was taking anxious glances upward, 'cause we all knew the crops would wither in the fields if relief didn't come soon.

I recollect it was about two o'clock when we got to the lake, and all of us feeling frisky as young colts because of the unexpected outing. Hank was real gallant helping Sally Ann and Melinda into the boat, though Lord knew they didn't need any help. They'd both been known to swim across the lake and back, and probably could have set Hank and me down in our places in a hurry if we'd tried anything

with them. As I settled in my place in the boat, I noticed the leaves rustle a trifle; and, sure enough, clouds—big black ones—were starting to form on the horizon.

"Hey, Hank," I yelled. "Take a look at those clouds over yonder. Reckon we hadn't oughta go out?"

"Does look kinda bad. I dunno if we should start out or not."

"Oh, no you don't, Hank Treeweather," Sally Ann piped up. "You boys asked us to go for a boat-ride, and that's just what we're fixin' to do. It hasn't rained all week and it's not gonna start before we get back! Come on, now, let's go! Melinda, let's sing somethin'."

There wasn't much I could say after that, so I dipped the oars in the water; and in a few minutes we were well out on the lake, Sally Ann leading the singing. Being a good Christian girl, and since it was Sunday, she started with a hymn. I finally chimed in when they came to :

"... and He walks with me,
And He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His Own . . ."

When you got out with the Boswell sisters, you didn't stay worried very long. I didn't even notice the sky getting darker or even the breeze starting to blow. We were all laughing and joking and then Sally Ann started the old favorite:

"In a little red barn on a farm down in
Indiana,

Let me lay my back on a stack of
new-mown hay . . ."

Then she broke off short.

"Land o' goodness, Melinda, just look at that sky! It'll be pourin' rain any minute. Why did you boys ever bring us out on this lake when there was rain a-hankerin'? My new dress'll be *ruined!*"

But it was too late to do anything then, because, just as she finished, the rain started . . . and hard.

"Do something!" the girls screamed, both at once.

Just about then I saw a rickety pier jutting out into the lake, one I'd never noticed before. It was nearly all rotten, but where there's a pier, there's usually shelter, so I headed for it. I beached the boat and we ran as fast as we could up the tangled path to the small cabin we saw through the brush. It wasn't a time for politeness so we busted in without knocking, and stood, just inside the door, gasping and peeling our wet clothes away from our skin. It was probably a full minute before I glanced up and looked around. Then I saw her. Standing at the other end of the room, holding some towels in her hand, stood Nellie Cutcheons.

So this was the cabin of the witch of Blake's Landing! A couple of little rooms in an old log shack comprised the den of iniquity folks in town were afraid to come near. And here were the four innocents, Hank and Sally Ann and Melinda and me, seeing something nobody in Blake's Landing had ever seen. Probably we wouldn't dare tell the folks in town about this adventure. They'd be liable to make witches of us, too!

Old Nellie started across the room, looking for all the world like somebody's sweet, smiling granny.

"Would you like to use these?" she asked.

Sally Ann and Melinda had eyes bigger'n a maverick's when they saw her, and Hank looked about the same. I could see that it was up to me to make the first move. It was probably most fittin' anyhow, since old Nellie knew me from the store.

"That's downright thoughtful of you, ma'am. We sure got ourselves into a spot o' trouble out on the lake. Don't know what we'd have done if we hadn't seen your pier."

Then I introduced her all around, but the Boswell girls only nodded like if they

were'nt quite bright, and Hank stammered something nobody could understand.

"I have some tea on the stove," old Nellie said. "I'll get you all a cup."

Finally I jammed the towels into the girls' hands and they started drying themselves off and whispering to each other a little. Old Nellie brought the tea and it seemed like, when the girls got something to hold in their hands, they started to relax. But Hank was quiet as a corpse. He puzzled me the way he was acting. I expected Sally Ann and Melinda to be scared and was afeared they'd refuse old Nellie's tea; but now they had their curiosity up and were looking around like new-born lambs. Hank just stared at his shoes and was white as a sheet.

The rain had cooled things off quite a bit, so none of us minded gathering around the stove to try to dry our clothes a trifle. Old Nellie sat in her rocker and chatted with us, and the more she talked, the more convinced I was that the folks in town were all wrong about her. She had the girls talking and giggling, and I could see that only Hank still didn't trust her. Sally Ann was getting so bold I was half afeared she'd start asking the old lady questions, or, even worse, want to lead us all in singing again. But before she could begin either one, old Nellie had a suggestion.

"Perhaps you'd like me to draw your pictures while you're waiting?"

"Oh, that'd just be real nice," Sally Ann chortled. Melinda didn't usually get to say much when Sally Ann was around, but she didn't seem to mind. I know she made up for it when she was away from her sister.

"Let's make this interesting," she said. "Suppose I draw you as I see you a few years from now . . . say about fifteen years."

Both girls let out a squeal at the novelty

of this idea, but then Hank spoke up for the first time.

"No, that's silly. Draw us as we are now."

"Oh, Hank, you old meanie. Anybody can draw us the way we look now. Let her draw us the way we're gonna look."

Hank just about always backed down from Sally Ann, but that day he wasn't about to give in all the way.

"Well, o.k., but not fifteen years. That's too long. Make it . . . make it five years."

Old Nellie didn't want any more quarreling, I reckon, 'cause she broke in on them.

"Very well, young man, five years. Perhaps it isn't wise to look too far into the future. Here, now, I'll draw your lady-friend first."

The old woman started to draw, looking at us real close while she did, almost as if she was looking through us instead of at us. She drew Sally Ann first, then Melinda, then me, and last Hank; but she wouldn't let us watch her draw or see the pictures till all four were done.

This was a development that had surprised me. Who ever heard of a witch with artist's talent? I was anxious to see what kind of pictures she would draw, but half afeared, too. Maybe she'd draw us burning in boiling oil. I kept looking around the room for signs of witchcraft, but there was nary a black cat, boiling cauldron, or string of herbs hanging up to dry. "It's all talk," I thought to myself. Finally she finished the pictures.

"Here you are, Sally Ann," she said as she handed her the picture. We all gathered around Sally Ann and shrieked with laughter. She was almost fifty pounds heavier, her hair all kinda mussed, but she was grinning from ear to ear. She laughed as hard as we did.

Melinda's picture was different. She was thinner on the picture, and all dressed up.

She kinda blushed when she saw it, 'cause girls like on that picture aren't very often seen in Blake's Landing—even among the summer-folk. "Pshaw," she said, "I could never look like that!" But she was pleased.

I was kinda disappointed with mine, 'cause you had to look close to see that it wasn't a drawing of me the way I looked right then. A couple more lines around the eyes and a little more chin, but that's all.

Then old Nellie handed me Hank's picture and excused herself while she stepped into the next room.

"You got the wrong side." This time it was Melinda talking. Her picture being so much prettier than Sally Ann's gave her a mite more confidence than usual.

"So I have!" I remarked. But when I turned the paper over, the other side was blank as the first.

"You been cheated, Hank," I said.

Sally Ann came back with, "Make her draw your picture, Hank. I don't want you getting off easier than I did."

"No, just forget about it. I don't want a picture, and, anyway, it's gettin' late. Our clothes are about dry and it's stopped raining. Let's go."

If it had been lighter out, the girls probably would have insisted Hank get his picture drawn; but it was kinda gray so we decided to leave before it started raining again. Old Nellie came back into the room then, and we thanked her for taking us in during the storm and for the pictures. Nobody mentioned Hank's picture, and I figure we all just thought that the old lady was absent-minded and forgot to draw his. Sally Ann and Melinda were real gay with her as we left, and I was downright positive that everything I'd heard about her was just idle talk. Folks around small towns don't always have much to entertain themselves, and it's mighty easy for a harmful story to get started that a person never can live down.

But as we set out for the boat, something happened that puzzled me. Old Nellie followed us to the door, then came out a few steps and laid her hand on Hank's arm.

"I can only draw what I can see," she said.

Hank looked at her a minute, then ran to catch up with the girls. They didn't hear what the old woman said, and all the way back to Blake's Landing they exclaimed over the pictures and what a shame it was that old Nellie forgot to draw Hank. Hank and I didn't have much to say. We knew that Nellie hadn't forgotten. Hank's paper was deliberately blank.

Well, it's four and a half years now since that Sunday outing, and old Nellie's two years dead. Some Labor Day fishermen noticed a fire in the brush, and found Nellie's cabin ablaze. Later they discovered her body, pretty well charred, on the floor beside the stove. No one could tell how the fire started. But many's the time I've thought about the old lady and the things people still say about her. For some reason, stories like these about old Nellie become legends and never die. When we left her shack that day, I was pretty near convinced none of them were true; but now I'm beginning to doubt. The following summer, Sally Ann married Bill Walters' boy, Lee, and moved over to Harfield. She comes back quite a bit to see her folks, and I've watched her pick up weight as the young 'uns came. She had twins the year after she was married, and a single one just last fall. She probably weighs forty or fifty pounds more than she did, and she always looks kinda sloppy; but her and Lee are happy as they can be, and always laughing and smiling.

The year after Sally Ann and Lee were married, Melinda won some kind of contest over at the lake, and the prize was a

scholarship to a modeling school. She did real well at the school and now she's working in New York. Every once in a while you can open a magazine and see Melinda smiling at you. She was home for a couple of weeks last Summer, and when she got off the train everybody in Blake's Landing just stopped and stared. She surely looked pretty.

Me? Well, the picture didn't exactly lie about me, either. I'm still around town, working in Pa's store. Oh, I'm married now, and there's something on the way, but I haven't changed much. A little heavier, maybe, but not so's you'd notice it. Things are just about the same.

Maybe this could all be coincidence. Maybe old Nellie wasn't a witch any more than I am, or maybe she was just a good judge of personality and could sorta tell how we'd turn out. At least that's what I told myself. Somehow, though, what she said to Hank kinda preyed on my mind. She couldn't draw him five years ago because she couldn't see him! The rest of us turned out just the way she said; and, today, four and a half years later, there's a Harfield newspaper on the counter in front of me. On the front page is a picture of Hank Treeweather, and the story beneath it says: "BLAKE'S LANDING BOY KILLED IN KOREA."

On Seeing the Motion Picture "Joan of Arc"

*Almost you had me fooled; that there must be
The woman in each scented Cyprian,
Who kissed more lustfully than any man
And killed as well, I half-believed. To see
A sweet-limbed Phryne move alluringly,
A wily Thais or a Paphian,
Was death, until I met (Was this your plan?)
The humble shepherdess of Domremy.*

*For then I knew your lie as one whose gaze
Across Sahara's sterile wastes has found
At last a towered town, which in the haze
That evening brings, will not decay. What sound
Could match that broken cry which he does raise,
So long denied, to all the sullen sand around?*

JAMES KINNEY

Yesterday's Montage*

FRANK PAVALKO

IT was one of those transparent mornings with a blue sky sweeping behind a brilliant sun. Sheets of silver slid over the dew-covered lawns of Noble Hill and sunshine sliced through the shady European elms behind the well. Pink hollyhocks braced their backs against the ruddy bricks of the old house, and purple morning-glories clung to the white clapboard shed, wide-eyed in their cool spot. The air, damp and sweet, smelt of rich soil, wet roses and dew.

This was Noble Hill, wrapped in the luster of a summer day. For me, no other world existed. People and places in geography and history books were so many pages between hardbound covers. And books themselves were annoying packages of print that had to be carried from my realm of open skies and wide fields to a grade school in a small dirty town, two miles away.

Before anyone could reach Noble Hill and our old house, which rested on its crown, they had to pass through Sharpsburg, with its modest houses crusty from the fumes and the smoke of a single steelmill that fed the town. North of this miniature Pittsburgh, hugging its outskirts, was Pleasant Valley. Here homes and gardens nestled themselves in bent lines against the side of Noble Hill, looking like the hamlets found under Christmas trees. An asphalt road, like a still river, cut through the sleeping valley, twisted around the hill, and at one point nudged an elbow into its lower side. From this spot, the upward climb would be over a cinder path with

the trees above lacing their branches together.

Memorable are the times when I walked this way. Ring-necked pheasants, with rainbow feathers, squatted on the trees and looked at the sky. Being wild and natural, they knew no fear. To a twelve-year-old boy, they were birds left over from Adam's paradise, put here by God with His own hands, just like the stream at the top of the hill and the white mayflowers hiding under the foliage, or the rabbits that sprinted over dead logs. Early in the morning or late in the afternoon, I would watch the squirrels leap and dive into the branches with acorns locked between their jaws. Sometimes a garden snake would weave his way across the path or a wild turkey would ruffle the calm by flapping its black wings. Every journey, up or down this cinder path, was a surprise package, bright and new.

On the summit of the hill, out of the path's shade, our old brick house could be seen pressed against the sky. Its great bay windows and high colonial porches resembled a southern mansion. Grandma told me it was built before the Civil War and I had every reason to believe her. All the rooms were solid with their heavy wood paneling and each had a spacious fireplace. A winding staircase that curved up and around to the second floor harbored within its bend a glass chandelier. On this floor, my bedroom, like all the others, had a trapdoor in the ceiling. I often wondered what was behind it, but never ventured to open the door because it had been covered with wall-paper, which, if cracked, could readily be detected. Grandma once said, that during the Civil War, spies traveling from

* First prize essay in The Mary J. Pursley Memorial Award for Creative Writing.

Virginia to Canada were hidden behind them. In a way, I believed her because the story added adventure to my boyhood dreams.

Of the many things I recall about Noble Hill I remember its solitude most clearly. Solitude that poured out of the open skies, flowed across the wide meadows, passed around the trees and seeped into the very rooms themselves. I felt it when I was alone in the meadow picking blackberries or just watching the clouds twisting themselves into pictures. In this strange stillness I was aware of someone watching me. It was that deep perception that children are guided by. Fear would grip me and a shadow would cross my heart, for I sensed the presence of God . . . majestic in a terrible volume of silence. I did not know it then, but that was the closest I ever got to Him.

The world of Noble Hill, with its rustic setting, was one of innocence. Little did I dream that one day it would topple down

and smash into a thousand pieces. I never thought the warm sunshine that spilt over the summer days or the cool wind that coasted through the damp woods (with all the creatures in them) would ever lose their freshness.

In my childhood days, I thought, as many young children still do today, that God made everything directly. I sincerely believed that He made people, animals and trees by His own singular command, and after He made them, placed them on this earth to love, serve and obey Him. It was in this frame of mind that I roamed through the beauty of Noble Hill and lived in an enchanted happiness. Later I learned the part man plays in his own continuance. The knowledge was harsh, naked and hard to believe. It coated my future world with the dull grey of realism. It crushed my idea of creation to a dry pulp. In its place was left a vacuum, which, for many years remained unfilled.



Litany to a Scientist

DAVID COADY

O BLESSED BEHAVIORIST, Most High Atheist, we pray this prayer to you today that we may honor, adore and glorify you. Deep in our hearts lies the gratitude we have felt, now feel, and shall ever feel for the many wondrous things you have wrought us. Slow from our lips come the words of praise, for words alone cannot express our inmost thoughts. Give us of your mysteries, O

Father of Cyclotrons,
Maker of Plutonium,
Originator of the Codeine Tablet,
Creator of the Atom Bomb.

We thank you first of all for the miracle of the Motor Car. You have shown us how to bear your knowledge over the country with swiftness and in comfort. How sad it is that some must abuse your gift. Yet, we who love you have seen the wisdom in your plan: our country must soon be over-populated, were it not that you saw fit to give us this method of self-annihilation. For this we thank you, and for the myriad other depopulation devices which you have given us, O

Perfector of the Machine Gun,
Innovator of Painless Abortion,
Bringer of Birth Control,
Father of the Flame Thrower.

We thank you for showing us the fallacy of thinking; for proving that we live as we are affected; we thank you for affecting us. You have shown us the abysmal error in the concept of Free Will and have led us to the meadowlands of mental therapy. You have proved that half of us are insane, and the other half abnormal. In your mercy, fluoresce upon us and light the way to the psychic norm. There are unbelievers who

say that your theories are only theories. Protect us against these fallen men, Great Scientist. Allow us not to degrade ourselves by scorning the Psychiatrist or cursing the Hydrogen Bomb. We implore the aid of your knowledge, O

Extractor of Heroin,
Inventor of Prophylactics,
Finder of the Homosexual Gene,
Writer under Water.

From our prefabricated homes, our glass-walled buildings, and our plastic automobiles, we pledge you faith. And though we may not understand the mysteries of vivisection, or the benefits of euthanasia, we accept them in reverence for your wisdom. How good it is to know that you will be with us even to the hour of death, and when the oxygen mask is removed, and you stand beside us with the Needle of Mercy, we will wish we could remain with you. We look upon death as necessary for depopulation, and we render thanks to you for proving that hell does not exist, O

Freezer of Sperm Cells,
Revealer of Sterility,
Improver of the Race,
Provider of Purest Strychnine.

We beg your mercy for those who lived before your coming. We know not how they lived without you, but we are in debt to you for showing us how they lived, O Quintessential Intellect. With wonderment, we scratch at the hair upon our heads, content in this evidence of our atavistic anthropoidity. With longing, we wish for the day when you shall grant men the privilege to live without hair, without toes and little fingers, food or water, noses or eyelids. We long to be yet alive in the age

when machines shall think and propagate, and men be capable of thought transmission. Perhaps you will even give us immortality, and a necessary cessation of conceptions. Yes, we adore you, O

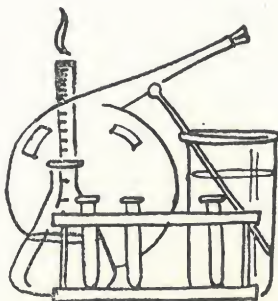
Purveyor of Peroxide,
Immovable Object,
Irresistible Force,
Calculator of Incalculable Chance.

Our hearts are full of your serums, and our minds are cleared with benzedrine, so that we may praise you from each aspect of our being. We wish now to thank you for delivering us from the scourge of previous generations: Self-dependency; you have shown us that you are the Creative, we the Receptive, and so, we thank you for Radio, Television, and the Cinema. Rarely now do we think of an evening of conversation or of productive endeavor—only the infidel would yield to such temptation. A constant joy is the sight of our children kneeling before the Television Set night after night; preserve us who are of age

from losing such child-like faith. Should we fail at times, spare us your wrath, for you are

Master of the Blazing Napalm,
Director of the Tracer Bullet,
Supplier of Germ Bombs,
Designer of Scientific War.

Last of all, we desire to praise you in highest speech for your love of other animals. We have heard of the animal mothers, with child without fertilization, which mystery you have wrought. Your prophets have spoken to us of this miracle, have told that it might be given to man. A few of us were skeptical—spare them. Your prophets have said, "One day your women shall bear children without the need for men." Should this come to pass, our men will sing your worth with words of unmistakable intent, for the lot of the male has ever been harsh, and this miracle would give him much-desired rest. And so, spare us your wrath—have mercy on us.



"Light in Darkness Lies"

DONALD CLARK

Characters:

Blindman

Drunkard (Tony)

Newsboy

Friend of Drunkard

Voice of Driver

Boys

Helper

Child

Bartender

[The Curtain sweeps aside revealing a perfectly opaque stage. On the stage down right, one bright spotlight pouring directly from above comes up gradually. There is nothing seen or heard for several moments after the fullness of the light is attained. Then comes a soft irregular tapping of a cane moving from the stage right rear. The sound begins softly and increases as it approaches the small circle of light. Intermingled with the tapping are heard at successive intervals the uncertain sliding of feet, a pause, and another step. A white wooden cane, directed by a hand moves just inside the ring of light, pauses, then continues slowly forward until the whole body of a man has moved into the circle of light. The man is dressed in a dark suit (baggy and worn) and a soiled, grey shirt with a drab tie. His head, hatless, reveals a full head of grey hair. He is about forty-five; the lines on his face are deep; his expression is one of weariness. His hands are large and rough, but express a sensitive awareness. The light pouring down upon him places everything in cold, hard black-and-white. The shadows make his eye sockets appear bottomless.]

Blindman: *[to audience]* My name . . . my name is . . . is . . . It makes no difference. I am blind. I am one of many who have no other designation than that he is blind. A vast, silent army shuffling slowly and cautiously across the face of earth.

Do you know what it is to be blind? To live in darkness, impenetrable night; in a world without light, absent of color, and void of that thunderous gift: vision. Never to know a sunrise, or the blends of color that fill a flower; never to experience the hues in late Autumn, or the moonlight shimmering on the snow. Never to know color. To live with words that are but pins of fear. To hear extolled, but never taste, a blue sky . . . *[pondering]* . . . a blue sky. Blue? Blue? Red? Green? What are they? Where are they? *[growing agitation]* Can I feel them with my hands or hear them with my ear? 'No,' I am told, 'You cannot. They are only seen.' But God! I cannot see them! *[whispered]* I cannot see. *[A pause]*

How can I describe my world? It is a dark plain bounded by odors, touches, sounds and fears. On this plain are objects, not as you know, but as a blind man knows. A thing to us is hard or soft, large or small, heavy or light, thick or thin, rough, smooth, hot, cold. In our limited yet uncertain world each object must be made a friend, understood, placed, and remembered. Failing this, they turn on us hateful, vicious enemies who will at a moment strike or entangle us.

You've never felt the sharp fear when the sidewalk ends or the cane taps air; the struggling in a world of edges and planes, half shapes and questions. A stone, a table, a wall, all are great unknowables until found by the stick or explored with the hands. Laboriously, touch on touch, we build our world; a fragile world, narrow and unstable. We *must* be a colorless, simple race; complication means fear; color means nothing.

But our world has one fearful friend: sound. Sound tells us much, directs us, warns us, comforts us. He marks the way; marks the true step from the false. In the voices of those we love we hear him driving out despair, anchoring our uncertainty. But it is he, our greatest benefactor, who gives us greatest fear. On sound comes the melody of a voice, the signets of the wind and rain, the mumbling thunder of machines, and the piercing mechanical screams of halting engines. He explodes in our ear, or hums afar, a formless fantasy.

And you? What are you to us and we to you? Only pieces of you step into our world, a hand, an arm, a foot, a breath, a voice. Often nothing more. Yet unknowingly you wound; at times deeply. A sudden whisper when we near—We know . . . we know. It is true, we are not whole men; and society does not admit the imperfect. [*bitterly*] But are we not human? We hurt, we suffer, and, amid the echoes of our lonely rooms, we cry. Don't you think we, human beings like yourselves, are overcome by the ignominy of clutching a tin cup.

[*softly, extending hand*] Come, take my hand and live an uncertain moment with me through life, my life. Live a moment, any moment, with me who has a piece of wood for hands and hands for eyes. Hear and feel the world as I do: the city, the people, the good, the bad, the kindness, the bitterness, the emptiness, and the fears.

[*He turns slowly to his right, adjusts his cane, and in the cautious, shuffling gait of the blind begins walking. The sounds of the city rise out of the darkness about him: the click of heels, hard, heavy, light, feminine, etc.; and steps, slow, fast, moderate; the sounds of autos; a police whistle; snatches of conversation, a feminine voice brisking by ". . . Helen's? Oh, yes deary, every weekend," a man's*

chuckle "... And more." Over these mixed half phrases the call of a newsboy comes closer.]

Newsboy: Paper! Paper! Latest pictures of Champion Fight. Paper mist . . . oh . . . I thought . . . [moving away] Paper, get your evening paper.

[The Blindman stops at a street corner near a lamp post and cautiously feels the edge of the curb, meanwhile listening to the traffic's movement. The traffic officer's whistle blows and the man steps down. There's a sudden blast of a horn, a screech of brakes, and a loud curse. The Blindman springs back to the curb, somewhat shaken.]

Voice of

Driver: D—, watch where your goin', Bud! [car is heard starting up and driving off. An arm grips that of the Blindman and a voice speaks in a quiet, friendly manner to him.]

Helper: Can't trust these drivers now-a-days, the way they go against the lights. All right? [The traffic whistle blows; they start to cross the street.]

Blindman: Yes, thanks. It gave me a fright though. [They reach the other side.] Take care of yourself.
I will, and thank you again.

[He moves along several paces, a frame and door appear. He starts in when three men, laughing and talking amongst themselves, brush heedlessly past him as they come out. He goes within and with an oft repeated precision finds a table. Only a small portion of the table, its dirty cloth, and a rickety chair fall within the edge cut by the light. The sounds of a bawdy record blurt out of the darkness off to the left rear of the stage. The sounds of the tavern, loud voices, tinkling glasses, and the sounds of a card game have risen quickly around his table.]

Bartender: [husky voiced] The same, Jim?

Blindman: [looking into the darkness across the table] Yes . . . Yes, the same, Al.

[In a moment the bartender returns, his hand and arm enter the light with a small dark glass of whiskey. The Blindman sips slowly. His head bends in thought; he looks very lonely amidst all the noise about him. He finishes his drink, places a coin on the table, and rises to leave. A big, heavy man with a cigar in his thick lips, steps unsteadily to the edge of light. The Drunkard buttonholes the blind

man. He is trying to be friendly in his drunken way. He puffs deeply on his cigar throughout the scene, loosely blowing the smoke into the face of the Blindman.]

Drunkard: Hey, pal, how about a little drink with me. You look pretty lonesome, pal.

Blindman: Thank you, but . . .

Drunkard: [*slapping the shoulder of the Blindman*] I'm celebratin', no reason, just celebratin. [*tugging at Blindman's arm*] Come on. Come on.

Friend of

Drunkard: [*laying a friendly hand on Drunk's shoulder*] Who's your friend, Tony?

Drunkard: My buddy here and I are gonna drink; I'm celebratin'.

Friend of

Drunkard: [*in a loud whisper*] Hey, Tony, this guy's blind. [*Blindman fumbles for his cane.*]

Drunkard: That's okay, I've been blind myself plenty of times. [*a thick harsh laugh . . . Blindman tears himself away*] Hey, where ya goin', bud? Ain't my money good enough ya blind bum? If I get ya, I'll fix ya. [*a shuffling of feet; a chair falls.*]

Friend of

Drunkard: [*quickly*] Wait, Tony. Let him go; let him go. We got all the more to drink.

Drunkard: [*breathing heavily*] Ya! Okay, Ya.
[*Blindman closes the door behind him and stands there a brief moment. He breathes a sigh of dejected relief, places his hat under his arm, and starts down the noisy street. A chorus of boys at play becomes audible over the street noises. The Blindman, though cautious, steps into their game of marbles. The boys make a loud cry.*]

Boys: Catch the 'shuffle shoes!' Yah, 'bat eyes,' get outta here! Hey, stupid! Watch where your goin', 'burnt out!'

[*Blindman steps back apologetically but becomes indignant at the names. One of the young toughs gives him a push; then another pushes. He begins to raise his cane but a hand snatches it away. They tap him with his cane; he whirls clutching wildly. They knock off his hat, and pull his coat tail. All the while they keep jibing him with cruel names. Someone finally drops the cane; it falls within the circle of light. The Blindman falls to his knees and in a frantic search finds the cane and his hat. The boys chide him until he recovers his*

cane; then run away. The Blindman rises and stands gripping his cane and crushed hat; he is tense and angry, listening for a movement about him. In a moment there is a light step, and a little girl of five comes into the circle of light.]

Child: Mr. Blindman, will you take my flower?

Blindman: [*startled yet defiant*] No!

Child: Please, it's for you. [*Blindman stretches out his hand and feels the soft hair of the little girl.*]

Child: Please take it, it's pretty, you'll see.

[Child places the flower in his hand; he puts it to his nose then brushes away a tear on his cheek.]

Blindman: [*Kindly, but wearily*] Yes, I see child . . . I see.

[He turns his back to the audience and slowly makes his way out of the circle of light. The little girl stands watching after him, listening to the tapping die away. The light over the girl gradually diminishes with each tap until the scene and sound fade away. Curtain.]

Margaret

*A silken sheen of softness
And a dainty graceful pose
Are worn by my beloved
As she stands in soft repose.*

*She sighs a whispered ribbon,
Sweet, serenely calm —
She laughs a lilting rivulet,
A bubbling, joyful psalm.*

*Her voice embraces phrases
In a feather-soft caress.
It flows in gentle cadence;
In liquid loveliness.*

JOHN CUMMINGS

Sex and Color-Vision*

JAMES SCHOLL

COLOR BLINDNESS occurs both as a congenital defect and as an acquired affliction. The former is not the result of disease but is an inherent imperfection of vision dependent upon unknown causes; the latter accompanies many diseases of the retina and optic nerve, or may result from toxic influences.

Congenital color blindness is known as Daltonism, after the English physicist Dalton, who was himself color-blind, and who was the first to describe the defect accurately. It may be total, in which case no color is recognized and the external world looks to be gray on a gray ground like an engraving (*achromatopsia*); or it may be partial, when there is imperfect discrimination of colors (*dyschromatopsia*).

Total color blindness is extremely rare as a congenital defect and accompanies other ocular abnormalities; partial color blindness, on the other hand, is rather frequent and may be the only visual defect present. Complete or partial blindness for a particular color may exist, or, as occurs in many cases, different colors may not be recognized with the same certainty and at the same distance or with the same degree of illumination as is the case with the normal eye (weakness of the color sense). In some color-blind individuals the perception of colors differs in the two eyes, but as a rule both eyes are equally affected. Thus, many variations exist between the normal color sense and total color blindness.

Color blindness occurs, as observations upon a great many individuals have shown,

in from 3 to 4 percent of men, while only about 0.3 percent of women are afflicted. This disproportion is accounted for by the fact that the defect is in many cases inherited, being transmitted by what is called discontinuous heredity, (remains latent in the female and becomes manifest only in the male offspring). This mechanism will be referred to later.

Two principal types of color blindness are generally recognized: red-green blindness, by far the most common, in which the afflicted individual is unable to discriminate between these two primary and complementary colors of the spectrum; and the very rare blue-yellow blindness, in which these two colors appear the same. Again each type may differ in its intensity; there being varying gradations between normal vision and complete blindness for the above mentioned combinations of colors. In rare instances there may be inability to detect but one of the primary colors (*protanopia*, red blindness; *deutanopia*, green blindness; or *tritanopia*, yellow blindness).

The cause and pathology of color blindness are unknown. Many theories have been advanced as to the nature of the defect; and though each theory has its adherents, those of Young-Helmholtz, Hering, and Ladd-Franklin are the ones generally accepted. The Young-Helmholtz theory explains color vision as the operation of three types of cone cells in the retina; one each for red, violet, and green-white—white being the maximal stimulus of all three types of cells, and black as the absence of stimulus. However, this theory does not prove adequate since white can be seen in the absence of a strong stimulus, and also the

* First prize essay in The William A. Hanley Science Award.

color-blind eye sees white as well as most other colors. The Hering theory assumes that there are photochemical substances in the retina: a black-white substance, a red-green substance, and a blue-yellow substance. The various wave lengths of light cause appropriate catabolic changes in particular substances causing specific sensations. Although this theory provides a better explanation for color blindness and white sight of the color-blind eye, nevertheless it violates the doctrine of specific nerve energy; that is, no nerve can conduct two kinds of impulses. The Ladd-Franklin theory postulates the evolution of color sensibility. The primary sensation is achromatic (the edge of the retina is still color-blind), and the various color fields (blue-yellow first, then red-green) evolve. None of the above theories, however, is adequate, and the question is still largely unsolved.

Many of the sufferers of color blindness remain in complete ignorance of the defect until it is discovered accidentally or by the application of some scientific test, since their sense of color values depends entirely upon the varying degrees of luminosity. The defect is incurable and as a rule remains stationary throughout life, although the color sense may be developed to some extent if training is begun at a sufficiently early period of life. There are not necessarily any accompanying visual defects, and the partially color-blind person may perceive bright colors readily.

The extent of the normal visual fields for the three fundamental colors varies: that for blue is largest (averaging about 30 degrees); that for red comes next in order (about 20 degrees), whereas, that for green is the smallest (about 10 degrees). Each has the same general shape as the visual field for white (which is roughly 60 degrees), and each field is narrower on the nasal side. The size and shape of the color fields may vary in different individuals, and

from day to day under normal conditions the acuteness of perception of the central portion of the retina (central color vision) as a rule does not correspondingly change. It is the latter faculty which is of the greatest practical importance in everyday life, and fortunately it is that which is most easily tested by the simpler methods. And though central color vision is generally altered in the course of diseases of the retina and optic nerve, it may also be affected, as a rule temporarily, by certain toxins of which tobacco and alcohol are the most common. It is therefore of the utmost importance that heavy smokers and drinkers be re-examined at frequent intervals when they are engaged in occupations where accurate color sense is required.

Color blindness, however, entails no disadvantage upon those who are afflicted with it beyond rendering them less fit for the performance of special tasks. Some occupations which require precise discrimination of colors are: the painter, the dyer, the color printer, the color photographer, etc. Moreover, with the increasing use of colored signals a normal color sense is of the utmost importance in personnel of the Army and Navy and in the allied branches of government services; in operators of motor vehicles; aviators; railroad and steamship employees, etc. For this reason candidates for those services, and prospective employees of the various occupations mentioned, are, or should be, tested with reference to their color sense, their entry or employment being conditioned upon proof that their color sense is perfect. Negligence in testing for such ability has resulted in many fatal accidents.

But at this point one may ask by what manner is the defect of color blindness congenitally transmitted.

Every human being and most other animals begin life through the union of a sperm and an egg: a single sperm enters a

single egg and thus a new offspring is started on its way. From the moment of conception the parents make no further contribution to the body of the new offspring (except, of course, the uterine environment and nourishment provided by the mother). It may then be concluded that the sum total of factors which constitute the heredity of an individual (color blindness included) is present in the fertilized egg.

For many years the exact role of the germinal materials (egg and sperm) was unknown. The discovery of minute rod-shaped objects within the nucleus of each cell provided a new field of inquiry. Could these objects (called chromosomes) be concerned with heredity? For a period of time the chromosome was thought to be the tool of heredity in itself, but soon it was found that the chromosomes are actually only the carriers of minute particles called genes, and that it is these genes which are the tools of heredity.

Investigation established the fact that the number of these chromosomes differs in each type of offspring. The fruit fly *Drosophila* has only eight in each cell, whereas man has forty-eight in each cell. Further investigation disclosed that these chromosomes are present in homologous pairs. Therefore, in man there are twenty-four kinds of chromosomes; however, two of each kind are present in each cell — making a total of forty-eight. But, if each cell carries forty-eight chromosomes, and the egg and the sperm are cells, then when they unite in fertilization it would seem that the resulting cell should have ninety-six chromosomes. The resulting offspring would be unlike its parents who had only forty-eight chromosomes in each cell. However, this is not the case. For by a special type of cell division called *meiosis* (in contrast to the normal cell division which results in exactly duplicated cells called *mi-*

tosis) the chromosome number is reduced to one-half in each germinal cell. And if one remembers that there are two of each kind of chromosomes in each cell, it is not difficult to understand that the number could be halved in cell division.

The egg, therefore, containing twenty-four chromosomes, and the sperm with a like number, produce a zygote (fertilized egg) with a total of forty-eight chromosomes. Thus, if all the heredity of the individual is present at the time of conception, and the hereditary factors are the genes within the chromosomes, the new offspring must receive the determiners of his heredity equally from his mother and from his father.

But since color blindness is linked to the sex chromosome, the mechanism of sex determination must be examined so that one can understand why color blindness is sex-linked.

Investigation has proved that there are some special chromosomes concerned with the determination of sex. These chromosomes have been named X chromosomes. It is known that when two X chromosomes are present, femaleness results, and that when one X chromosome is present maleness results. However, there are two of each kind of chromosomes! In this case the single X in a male has a partner called a Y chromosome. It is somewhat like an X, but it has very few genes and is a sort of impotent "little brother" to the X chromosome. Hence, a female may be indicated as XX and a male as XY.

The genes present in a chromosome can change (mutate) and cause a deviation from the normal in the offspring receiving the mutated gene. However, if the corresponding gene in the homologous chromosome is normal, the offspring will be normal in appearance, but will be a "carrier" of the mutant or a hybrid. This is the principle of dominance. The general rule is: the

normal trait is dominant.

The gene for color vision is carried in the X chromosome; this has been experimentally proved. If, therefore, a female is color-blind, both the X chromosomes in this female carry a color blindness gene, for if one were normal the female would have normal color vision. In the male, if the individual is color normal, only a color normal gene is present, because there is no corresponding color vision gene in the Y chromosome.

Next it may be asked what are the possible combinations of the color vision trait in the female? Since there are two X chromosomes in the female cell, and each has one gene for color vision, the following combinations are possible:

1. XX—both carry normal color genes.
2. XX'—X' carries a color blindness gene.

3. X'X'—both carry color blindness genes.

As for the male, there are only two possible combinations, since in the male there is the XY combination of sex chromosomes, and only the X has a gene related to color vision.

1. XY—only a color normal gene is present.
2. X'Y—only a color blindness gene is present.

Thus there are three possibilities in the female and two in the male. But in determining how eggs and sperm combine and what type of offspring they will produce, one must remember that only one egg and only one sperm unite to form a single offspring. Furthermore, it must be remembered that sperms are of two types. Each sperm may contain an X or a Y chromosome. Eggs are only of one kind: they con-

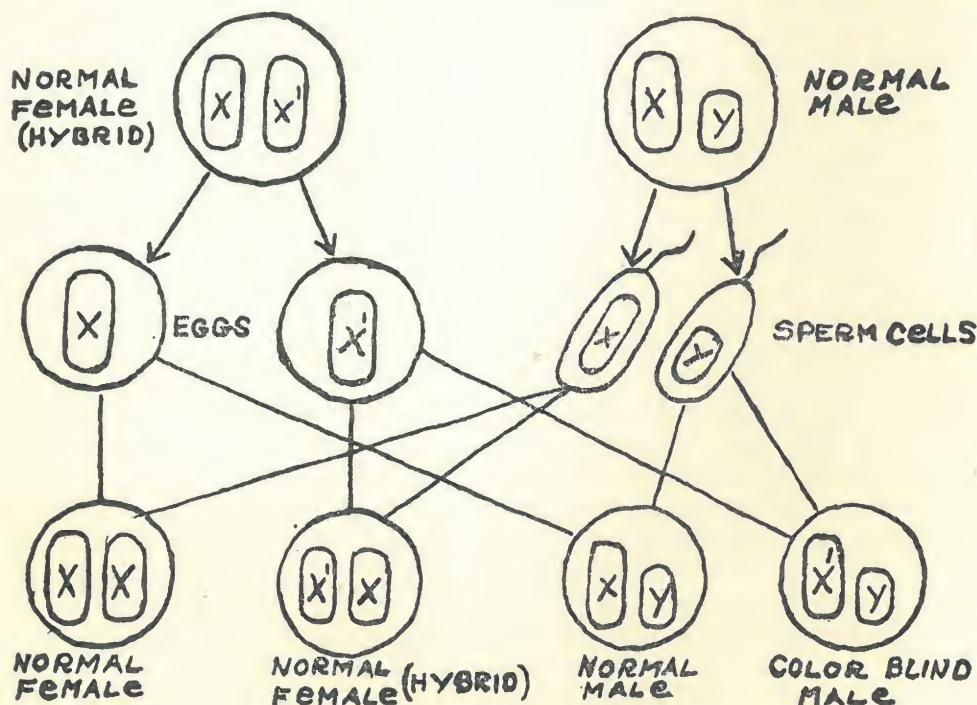


FIG. 1 MATING OF HYBRID FEMALE WITH A NORMAL MALE

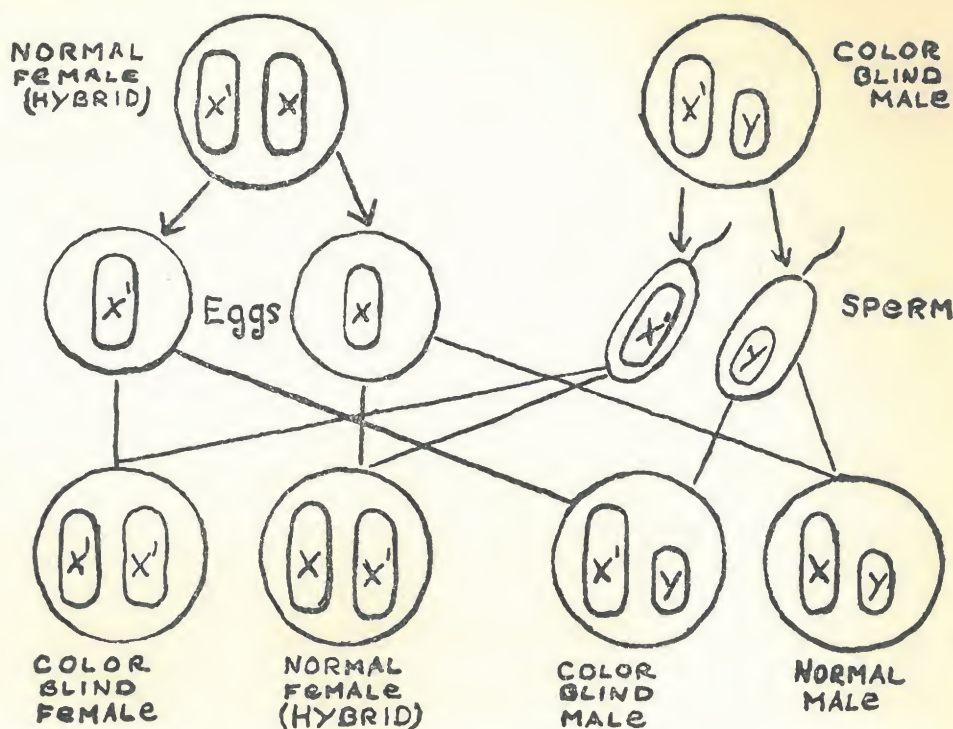


FIG. 2 MATING OF HYBRID FEMALE WITH A COLOR BLIND MALE

tain a single X chromosome. Egg and sperm may combine in any one of the following five ways.

If a normal female (both X's for color normal vision) mates with a normal male there is only one possibility: all the offspring produced will be normal. If there is no color blindness gene present in either mother cell or father cell, there is no possibility of a color blindness gene being involved in the process of fertilization.

If a hybrid type female (one X normal, the other X for color blindness) mates with a normal male, one half of the male offspring are color-blind, and one half of the females are hybrid. (Cf. Fig. 1).

If a hybrid type female mates with a

color-blind male, one half of the females are color-blind, and the other half are hybrid for color blindness. One half of the males are normal whereas the other half are color-blind. (Cf. Fig. 2).

If a color-blind female ($X'X'$) mates with a normal male, all the females will be hybrid; all the males will be color-blind. (Cf. Fig. 3).

If a color-blind female mates with a color-blind male all the offspring will carry only X chromosomes with color blindness genes and all the offspring will be color-blind.

To apply the preceding information in a practical way. In my own family there are two sons and one daughter. My brother is color-blind, having first learned the fact when attempted to enlist in the Marine

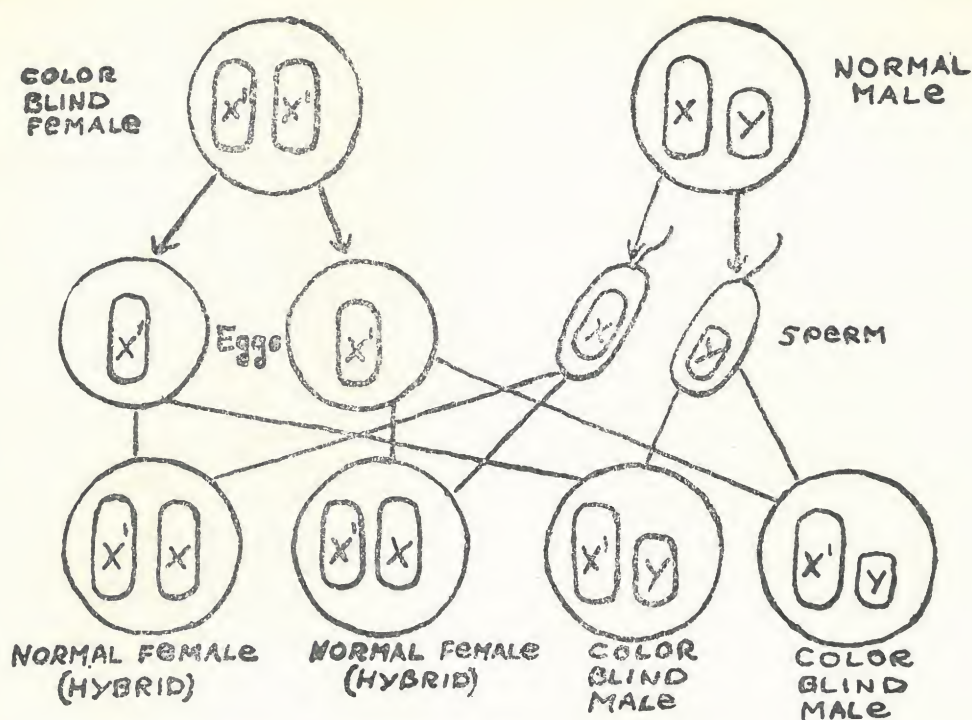


FIG 3. MATING OF COLOR BLIND FEMALE WITH A NORMAL MALE

Corps at the start of World War II. (This is an illustration of the fact that a color-blind individual may be completely unaware of his condition.) On the other hand, when I went into the service, I passed the color blindness test; hence, I knew that I was not color-blind. However, to the best of my knowledge no other individual in the family had ever been tested for color blindness. But nothing certain could be assumed from these two facts. Consequently I proceeded to trace this color vision trait by means of a complete and thorough examination of the entire family.

For the test I used a set of Pseudoisochromatic Plates prepared by the American Optical Company. These plates are designed to test color perception accurately by eliminating the factor of color intensity (by which many color-blind individuals learn

to distinguish between colors). These plates are a mass of vari-colored dots (all of the same intensity) in which a series of differing color dots are placed so as to produce a number, letter, or irregular line. If a person can distinguish colors he can easily read the numbers or letters, or follow the irregular lines.

I made every effort to standardize the conditions of the test so as to eliminate error. The plates were shown under a uniform light source (daylight) and at a standard distance from the eyes of the subject.

The diagram in Figure 4 is the family history — working back from my generation to that of my maternal grandparents:

Individuals R, J, and N were examined first. R gave a positive test; N and J gave negative tests. Now, since R is a male and

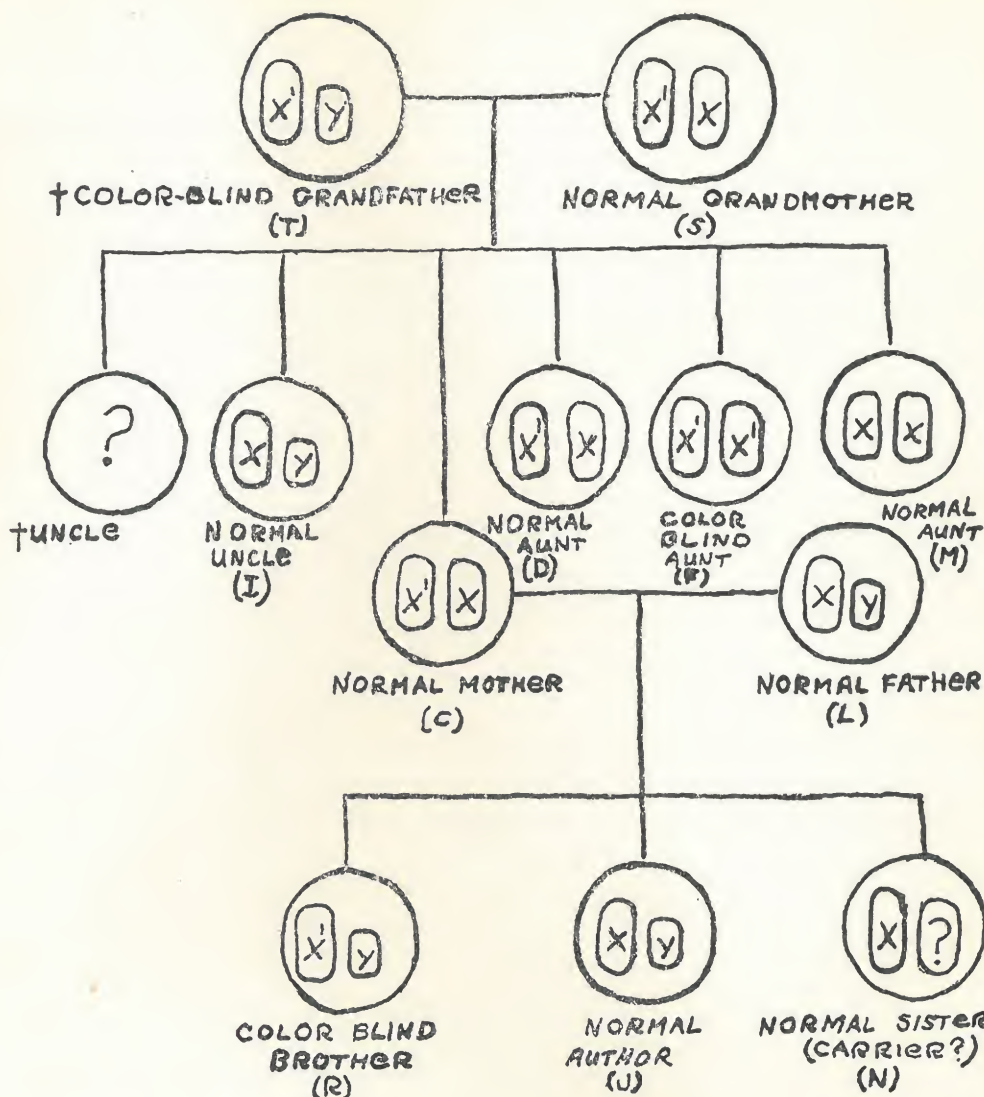


FIG. 4. FAMILY HISTORY TRACING COLOR BLINDNESS FROM THE PRESENT GENERATION TO THE MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS.

color-blind, we can be certain that his mother, C, is either hybrid or color-blind. However, since J tested normal we know the mother to be hybrid (since the male receives the X chromosome from the mother, the father contributing the Y). This assumption was borne out when C tested

color normal. The female N tested color normal, but she could be hybrid (she received one X from L, who tested normal, and thus has only a color normal X to contribute; but C could have contributed either a color normal or a color defective X chromosome). However, this would have to be

proved by the type of offspring which N produces.

Since the father, L, checked normal, and the mother, C, checked normal we know that R must have received his color blindness X chromosome from C who is a hybrid.

In order to check the lineage back to the grandparents the brothers and sisters of C had to be checked (three sisters and one brother are living). One of the sisters was found to be color-blind, and the other sisters and the brother checked normal. The grandmother, S, checked color normal, but since F is color-blind we know that S contributed one of the color blindness X chromosomes and therefore is hybrid for color blindness. The other X chromosome in F was contributed by T and so we know him to have been color-blind.

Thus the color blindness gene was retraced to the maternal grandparents; the male having been color-blind and the female having been color normal but hybrid for color blindness.

Such a study as this present one has dem-

onstrated what color blindness is, how it is acquired, and how it can be traced back through the generations. However, information about color blindness is of little more than academic interest, because so little is known about the exact effect the color blindness gene has on the retina of the eye. No remedy has been found to date, and indeed, very few people are concerned with finding a cure for a malady that is never fatal. Perhaps one day one of the new "wonder drugs" or hormone extracts will affect a cure, but its discovery will no doubt be accidental.

The only sure way to eliminate congenital color blindness is by selective mating. This requires a constant outbreeding (breeding color defectives with color normals) of the color defectives so as to submerge the defect under the dominant color normal gene.

However, the old saying "love is blind" probably includes color blindness, and it is very improbable that a man or a woman will select a mate on the basis of a color vision test or a chart giving the family genetic lineage.



The Wedding

DANIEL BOYLAN

THE YOUNG MAN replaced the magazine on the rack. "These small town bus stations are all alike," he thought, "small and dingy and the busses always late." He lit a cigarette and lounged against the door frame. There was nothing in his appearance to suggest whether he belonged in the town or not. He was of medium height and medium weight and had medium brown-colored hair. His white shirt was open at the collar, a dark blue sweater pulled over it; he wore gray pants, and his shoes were scuffed. He was the "average American"; he could have been from anywhere in the country. Since he had no luggage, it was obvious he was going no place. He waited a few seconds, then turned again to the magazine rack. He was standing there when the bus pulled in.

It was a Greyhound bus, travelling from St. Louis to Detroit. It stopped at almost every town between its alpha and omega, but few people got on or off at these stops. It seemed for a few seconds that no one would get off this time, but finally a young girl appeared in the doorway. She, too, was "typically American," a girl from anywhere in the country. She was of medium height, with dark brown hair beneath a pert little hat whose color matched almost exactly the lime-colored suit she wore. A coat was thrown over her arm, and she carried an overnight bag. She glanced briefly out the door, then started cautiously down the steps to the sidewalk.

The man in the station watched her descend, studying her intently all the while. Then he tossed his cigarette away and walked toward the bus. The girl was just handing the driver the claim check for

her luggage when she saw the man emerge from the station. Their eyes caught and held.

"Hello, Connie."

"Hello, Chuck."

"I've been delegated a one-man reception committee. Glad you got here. We'd best get right over to Parker's. Emily's in a regular state waiting for you to arrive."

He took her bags and they started up the street. "Car's this way," he said.

"I should have caught an earlier bus," the girl countered, "but Mr. Bennett wouldn't let me off till noon."

Their conversation kept up at this same pace, as if they were avoiding something, stalling. Shortly before Chuck stopped the car in front of the big white house on Davis Street, he broke the trend. Huskily he remarked, "You're looking well, Connie."

"Thanks, Chuck, so are you."

Once inside the house, Connie was greeted with cries of delight from Emily Parker, whose marriage was only two days away, and whisked off upstairs. Chuck wandered back to the kitchen where Jeff Hanna, the prospective groom, was pouring some whiskey into a tall tumbler partially filled with mix.

"Why the long face, best man?" Jeff asked cheerily.

"Just tired, I guess." Chuck managed a smile. "Fix one of those for me, will you, Jeff?"

"Take this one. I'll fix a better one for me!"

Chuck sipped at the tall glass, then remarked, "I just picked up Connie."

Jeff sobered a trifle. "Good. Is she upstairs?"

"Yeh."

"I'll see her later then."

Jeff started to work on his own drink, then lit a cigarette and sat down.

"You should have been first, Chuck, you and Connie."

"I know. Maybe it just wasn't supposed to be!"

"I think you still love her."

"I don't know if I do or not, Jeff."

"Why did you two ever 'break up' anyway? You never would tell me."

"I don't know the answer to that one myself. We had that big quarrel the night of the Prom, and that was the end of it. We were both too proud to make the first move after that."

"Too damn stubborn, if you ask me. How did things go, tonight?"

"Pretty cool. Neither one of us knew what to say."

"And you haven't even written each other or anything for a whole year?"

"No . . . nothing. But let's forget the whole thing for awhile. You and Emily are getting married. It's a happy event! Connie and my troubles are out of bounds."

"Listen, boy, I don't want the best man and the maid of honor snarling at each other at the altar!"

Chuck finished his drink with a quick gulp. "No snarling, Jeff, I promise!"

Alone in his room that night, Chuck tried to think over the situation rationally. He'd loved Connie once, and she'd loved him. Was it possible merely to stop loving a person overnight? Actually, he knew it had not been overnight. They had gone together all through college, just as Jeff and Emily had done. It was towards the end of their senior year that things had begun to seem strained, the misunderstandings more frequent. They'd planned to become engaged after graduation, but their violent quarrel the night of the Prom had shoved all such plans into the background. Chuck had thought it

was all over, but after seeing Connie tonight, he'd begun to wonder. He'd been very happy at the thought of being best man at Jeff's wedding until he'd learned that Emily had asked Connie to be maid of honor. Now he knew that his apprehension over seeing Connie again had been completely justified. The peace of mind he'd spent a year creating was being shattered.

Chuck's first opportunity to talk to Connie came at the rehearsal dinner the night before the wedding. It was during one of those inevitable periods when the conversation shifted to people that they, being from "out of town," did not know.

"What're you doing these days, Connie?"

"Working for a lawyer at home, Chuck—Merrill Bennett. It's very interesting—Mr. Bennett handles a lot of criminal cases. Practically none of that routine 'divorces and abstracts' stuff. He's the busiest lawyer in town. I thought he was going to explode when I told him I was taking four days off! What're you doing, Chuck?"

"Personnel department of that furniture factory I used to tell you about."

"The job you wanted! I'm so glad for you, Chuck!"

"Yeh, it's interesting enough, but I just haven't been satisfied lately. Routine's getting me down, I guess."

"Maybe you should get married."

"Maybe."

"I've been meaning to tell you, Chuck . . . I'll probably be getting married myself before long. A boy I met last summer—Paul Driscoll. He's an interne at Nazareth Hospital."

The fork in Chuck's hand glided slowly to his plate. He felt as if his chair had been pulled from under him, and he was alone and conspicuous, with the whole room whirling about him.

"I see," he finally managed. "I guess congratulations are in order. When's the wedding to be?"

"Probably next spring when Paul finishes at Nazareth."

"Fine. Have you told Em and Jeff yet?" The words were artificial and forced.

"Emily knows everything. We've been corresponding regularly. She's probably told Jeff."

"He never said a word to me."

Connie looked at him curiously, a puzzled expression on her face. "Why should he?"

Chuck's thoughts as he went through the rehearsal were scarcely on the business at hand. He knew he deserved this turn of events as surely as he deserved Connie's remark at dinner. Why should Jeff tell him about Connie's engagement? It should have meant nothing to Chuck. All that was between Connie and him had been finished the night of the Prom. He was acting like a fool now, he swore, then remembered an old saying he'd once heard about a fool and a man in love being one and the same. And he was a man in love, he admitted to himself now. But the situation was hopeless.

The day of the wedding dawned bright and sunny. Birds heralded the early spring day and tiny green tips dotted the branches of the trees. On the steps of the church, people began to gather in excited little groups, gay flowers nestling snugly between lapels and sleeves. From inside the church came the music of the organ: sometimes so solemn, sometimes so jubilant, but today triumphant in the rebirth of the glorious season of spring. A perfect day for a wedding! Chuck waited with Jeff at the front of the church as the bridal party began its slow journey to the altar. The minutes seemed like years, and over and over Jeff's words came back to him: "You should have been first, Chuck, you and Connie."

Weddings are really very strange affairs. One plans for them and looks forward to them for months, sometimes for years, and,

when they finally arrive, they are over so quickly that one is left in a sort of daze over the rapidity with which time has passed. Jeff and Emily's wedding was no exception, and soon Chuck was being jostled by the enthusiastic crowd waving good-bye as the newlyweds drove away to their secret destination. An unaccustomed wave of loneliness suddenly swept through him, as he turned back into the house and slowly ascended the stairs to the second story of the Parker home. He couldn't understand why the sight of Emily and Jeff driving away had made him feel so discouraged; but he did feel that way, and he wanted only to be alone for a few minutes. Reaching the top of the stairs, he seemed to leave the whole melee behind him, and he felt vastly relieved.

Then, suddenly, the crackle of paper being crushed together grasped his attention, and he stepped towards the room where the presents were being displayed. Connie was there, alone, gathering up the discarded wrappings from recently opened gifts. Her full-skirted yellow gown billowed about her as she stooped to retrieve another wrapping. Chuck saw how perfectly the color complemented her features. Emily had been very wise.

"Oh, Chuck, you startled me!"

"You startled me, too. What are you doing up here all alone?" He noticed then that her eyes were red-rimmed.

She laughed slightly: "When the kids drove away, I just felt like I had to have a good cry so I came up here, and then saw all this mess. It was a beautiful wedding, wasn't it?"

"It sure was! I'm proud I was in it."

"Me, too." She avoided his eyes and remained engrossed in the papers.

"Don't do it, Connie!"

"Don't do what?"

"Don't marry him!"

"You're a little late, aren't you?"

"I love you, Connie. I thought I didn't, but the minute you stepped off that bus I knew I was wrong."

"How can you know you love me, Chuck? You haven't seen me or even written to me in a whole year."

"I've been stubborn, Connie—I admit it. But let's be honest, so have you. Love is something you can't turn on and off like a water spigot. Once it's on, it stays on. We were in love once, I think we still are—I *know* we still are!"

"Oh, Chuck, how can you be such a fool? Do you think you can just walk out of my life one day and come back a year later and walk right back in? I nearly went crazy at first, never knowing, never hearing—do you honestly think a girl can go through that and still feel the same?"

"If you're asking me a question, I suppose I'll have to say, 'Yes,' because it's like that with me, and that's the only standard I can judge by. I thought you were out of my life completely until I saw you again. Now I know you can never be."

"What about Paul? You don't know how difficult it is, Chuck. It's different for a man—he can go out and carve a new life for himself. A woman has to sit home and wait, and think, and die of loneliness. Paul changed all that for me, Chuck. If it hadn't been for him I don't know what I'd have done."

"Sure, Paul's probably a swell guy, but you don't love him, Connie, you don't love him. You love me!—you've got to!"

She was in his arms now and unresisting as he kissed her. But suddenly she spread the palms of her hands on his chest, shoving him gently away. "I can't, Chuck. I'm sorry, but I've given my word. I'm going to marry Paul Driscoll." She hurried past him and down the stairs.

The insistent buzz of the doorbell woke Chuck out of a sound sleep the next morning. Coming down the stairs of the Hanna

house, he wondered if the Parkers' was even a small percentage as neat as this. "It's much easier to be the parents of the groom," he thought.

"Good morning, Chuck," Mrs. Hanna called as he reached the living room. "How're you feeling this morning? Come have some breakfast before church."

Obediently Chuck followed her to the kitchen and sat down at the breakfast table. Mrs. Hanna joined her husband and Chuck shortly and the three of them exchanged small talk about the wedding and the telegram whose delivery had been the cause of Chuck's being awakened. It read: "ARRIVED SAFELY INDIANAPOLIS STOP EVERYTHING FINE STOP HOPE CHUCK CAN SAY SAME."

"Whatever does he mean, Chuck?" Jeff's mother asked.

"A little personal matter, Mrs. Hanna. But I'm afraid he and Em are going to be disappointed."

Mrs. Hanna reached over and patted his hand. "Don't give up so easily, Chuck. She hasn't gone home yet!" She grinned slyly and Chuck wondered just how many other people had known what was happening. But he grinned back at her.

"Thanks, Mrs. Hanna, but I'm afraid it's no use. It's been too long. Now I'd best finish dressing or I'll be late for church."

Chuck looked over the array of clothes he had hanging in the closet and emitted a small groan at the thought of the packing that awaited him later in the day. As he straightened his tie in the mirror, he heard the telephone ring and Mrs. Hanna answer it and talk briefly. Glancing outside he decided there was no need for a topcoat, and in a few minutes he was back downstairs.

"I'm leaving for church, Mrs. Hanna!"

"Oh, Chuck, that phone call was for you. But the oddest message: Connie wants you to meet her after church—something about a water spigot that's been running

for a whole year. Do you know what she means?"

Chuck grasped Jeff's mother by the arms. "Are you sure that was the message?"

"Of course."

"So long, Mrs. Hanna! Don't wait dinner for me—I don't know when I'll be back!!"

"But shouldn't you come back and change clothes if you're going to work on the

plumbing?"

"No, *Ma'am!* I'm going to fix that spigot so it *never* turns off—but what I'm wearing doesn't matter the least little bit!"

"Well, I declare!" Mrs. Hanna remarked to her husband. "He's in such a hurry he just hurdled the bannister! Rather big for such childishness."

"Umh!" her husband replied. "And is he now?"

The Sentinels

*A city of light and mellow sunshine,
Standing brightly under cotton skies.
Massive houses, shiny gardens,
Restlessly wait for the day to die.*

* * * *

*City of ebony, low and quiet,
Resting softly under blackboard skies,
Blank buildings, smothered in shadows,
Silently wait for the night to die.*

FRANK PAVALKO

Cooper: "First Voice of America"

JAMES KINNEY

MANY American readers remember James Fenimore Cooper merely as the author of a few thrilling adventure stories which, if little else, provide a wholesome pastime for boys and girls of high school age: books like *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Deerslayer*, and *The Spy*. These same readers probably thought he was "wonderful" back in the days when reading about Indian skirmishes was easier than working algebra problems and reliving adventure on the high seas came more naturally than being a student of Freshman English. But with the passing of years and the growth of new interests, these same readers undoubtedly have returned Cooper to their bookshelves as obsolete. Such an impression is certainly unfair treatment for the "First Voice of America."

Cooper was the first American author, writing about America, to gain international fame. Many recent critical anthologies tend to underestimate this point. Although it is true that Washington Irving was our first universally-accepted worker in *belles-lettres*, nevertheless, he gained his fame through stories of Old Spain and the early Dutch settlers of New York State. And these latter worthies never possessed a sufficient degree of New Worldism to be considered American.

It was James Fenimore Cooper who painted the original picture of America for the countries of Europe. Franklin and Paine had given them a rather idealistic view of our civilization in the various pieces of propaganda distributed during the Revolution. But their purpose had been all too evident. And in the first twenty-five years of the nineteenth century, the new nation

was too busy growing up to worry about its prestige in foreign countries. It remained for the squire of Ostego Hall, with his profound knowledge of the American scene, to perform the task. That he did his job well is attested to by the fact that Cooper is still our best spokesman in many European countries.

In the field of purely literary endeavor also, Cooper deserves mention as the originator (among American authors) of a new type of fiction: the sea novel. For *The Pilot* was the first long story to be published by an American that pictured in detail the movement and handling of vessels. In fact, in all of Cooper's novels his love of the sea was to rival his love for the forest, and one could almost say that his solution for all the problems of fiction was to take his readers on a voyage.

But the sea novel was not Cooper's only invention. He created the first full-blooded American fictional character in Natty Bumppo of the *Leatherstocking Tales*. Here was proof to the world that there was such a thing as an American personality. Everyone could remember pioneers like Natty, leaning on their long rifles and surveying, with eminent satisfaction, the steady westward retreat of the frontier. Natty was destined to remain the symbol of a moment of civilization—the dawn of what has since been called the "new American soul."

Cooper never was successful in portraying any other scene besides that of America. He tried his hand at some stories about the Continent, in imitation of his one-time friend, Sir Walter Scott, and attempted one or two tales of Medieval Italy. The best

of these, however, was only mildly successful. It seemed that he had an all-American imagination, and that his genius lay in just that one direction.

Yet, despite the efforts that Cooper made to insure the prestige of his country, not infrequently he became embroiled in bitter controversies with his fellow-Americans. For example, on his return from a seven year trip to Europe, Cooper began to criticize some of the liberties which were being taken in the name of democracy. He likewise expressed offense at the abandon with which certain newspapers were using harsh adjectives to describe the articles and lectures he had produced on the subject. And he vehemently objected to the squatters who were using part of his property on Ostego Lake for picnicking. Towards the end of his life, he remarked that he might have avoided much of his unhappiness if he had allowed the wrongs which he noticed to have passed unnoticed. But he had always vigorously maintained his right to think for himself and scrutinize critically every one of his country's institutions. It was only in his last days, as James Grossman tells us in his critical biography of Cooper, that the latter came to realize

"... that taking thought against one's own time may be ... a sorry business and that there may be a happier wisdom in not struggling against our own unthinking ways."

Whether we blame Cooper or his ad-

versaries for the origin of the controversy is beside the point. The fact remains that he was right. His criticism of the American democracy of his time has been proved correct, though most of his own generation regarded him as a "wrong-headed, self-constituted Jeremiah."

William Cullen Bryant had the right idea about Cooper's stand against social and political conventions when, in his eulogy of Cooper, he said:

"He never thought of disguising his opinions, and he abhorred all disguise in others; he did not even deign to use that show of regard towards those for whom he did not think well, which the world tolerates and almost demands."

This year we mark the centennial anniversary of James Fenimore Cooper's death. America has come a long way since his time; it is no longer the red-faced little nation struggling for a place in the sun. It has assumed the role of a great world power with the destiny of all other nations literally in its grasp. It is proud, and rightly so, of the leaders who have made it what it is. But it has neglected at least one of them. It has forgotten the one critic of its political and social ideals who was always so provokingly right, because he was so scrupulously sincere. Perhaps the year 1951 would be a good year for America to rediscover a writer who is worth more than just a handful of interesting adventure stories for imaginative young readers. James Fenimore Cooper certainly merits such a revaluation.

The Last Delivery?

FRANK PAVALKO

"IF I WANTED TO, Bob, I could twist your life into a heap of junk. You know that, don't you?"

"Yes, Charley, I do. And don't think it hasn't worried me."

"You want to be a doctor. Hasn't it occurred to you, Bob, that if I ever start revealing certain things, you wouldn't be worth a nickel at this college. People around here think you're pretty sharp. My information would certainly be shocking, wouldn't it?"

"You wouldn't dare. Your own reputation is involved. You would be cutting your own throat."

"But I'm not a student, Bob. You are. Besides, I can always leave. I don't have a family to really speak of, but you do. And, from what I gather, they seem to be very, very proud of you. It would be a shame to disillusion them."

"Look, I don't see any sense in these threats. I told you once, Charley, that I'm finished with this rotten business. I don't really know what it's all about, but I do know that it's rotten . . . absolutely rotten."

"How touching! But the money you get isn't so rotten, is it? It's getting you an M.D., isn't it?"

"Charley, I'm beginning to hate you. So much in fact, that . . ."

"That's the point. You're beginning to hate me without any reason. If you recall, Bob, you gave this thing a start. It really is your baby."

"All right, so I did start it. But I tried to end it, too."

"Now really, did you? You didn't try so hard in 1948. In fact, that's when you opened up this little business of *ours*."

"1948 was different. I didn't know it would all turn out this way. Besides, nothing took place in 1949."

"That's right, Bob, nothing did. You worked a short while there, but when you got tired of good hard legitimate work, you started over again. Recall the fall of 1950?"

"Yes, I do."

"You started it again that time, remember?"

"Charley, I wasn't fully responsible. It was accidental."

"Accidental, hell! You wanted the money. Stop rationalizing, and admit it. Bob, you have the dizziest way of twisting your illusions."

"It was your fault, too, Charley. You helped."

"I may or may not have helped. That fact is beside the point. You are the one who is responsible."

"All right, suppose I am responsible. Suppose I have gone through with this deal. You don't have any proof because no one saw us."

"Bob, you don't think that I'd get tangled up in something like this without gathering my own little proofs. I like security, and I line things up to see that I get it. When I'm ready, I'll display my proofs."

"So you want to smash my career. What's the motive, revenge?"

"No, Bob, I don't want to smash your career, I want to save mine. And the only way I can save mine is to save yours."

"O. K., Charley, so what do you intend to do?"

"I intend to remind you, Bob, that I can always tell your friends and relatives what

kind of operator you are."

"I thought you were above petty blackmail."

"Not when it cradles good green money."

"No, Charley, I'm not going to continue. I'm finished."

"Just think, Bob. A few words dropped here and there. A little proof along with it, and your reputation and career are as good as useless."

"You would be low enough to do it, wouldn't you?"

"Not low enough, just smart enough, Bob. It's a case of necessity. I have to eat, too, you know."

"Charley, look. I just can't go on with this business. It's cheap and small and rotten."

"It isn't any more rotten than you are. Stop trying to think one way and live another. You confuse yourself and everybody else."

"Charley, you don't understand me."

"I understand you better than you understand yourself. Since you got me involved in this, I've learned a lot about you."

"Look, Charley, why don't you leave this town? Why don't you go away? It would solve everything."

"It won't solve a thing. I would be gone, but you would be circling in the same pattern. A leopard doesn't change its spots over night."

"Look, Charley. Get this straight. I never said anything like this to anyone before. But I mean it. If I find out that you've told anyone about this, I'll kill you. I promise you that."

"Stop getting dramatic. You haven't got the guts to kill a fly. Besides you needn't worry, Bob. Nothing has been said . . . yet."

"I don't like that 'yet'! What are you after, Charley? Come on, what do you want?"

"You know very well what I want."

"The answer is 'no'! Get it, . . . 'no'! Now get out of here."

"O. K., Bob, so you won't play ball with me. But before you get too stubborn, I'd advise you to think of Taylor. You know how Taylor is. When he calls for something, he wants it. He's been generous to you Bob, mighty generous."

"I'm not going to do it, Charley. I'm not."

"Think of the debts you owe, Bob. Quite a bit of cash, you know. At the rate you spend money, you'll never get your degree."

"All right, Charley, you win . . . for the time being, anyway."

"Where are they, Bob?"

"In the usual place. Well, just don't stand there. You know where they are, go and get them."

"On top of the locker?"

"Yes, Charley, on top of the locker."

"Oh, ya! Here they are, Bob, in the little blue box. Gee, there aren't too many here."

"That's all I could get. Professor Dellert knows how many are around. If too many are gone, they miss them."

"Who's 'they,' Bob?"

"The laboratory supply department."

"Well, what are you staring at Charley? What's the matter?"

"I'm not staring, Bob, I'm just thinking."

"Thinking of what?"

"I'm thinking, Bob, that it ought to be worth something to a guy like you to have a guy like me remain nice and quiet about a thing like this."

"Charley, you're getting ugly. What's on that corrupt mind of yours?"

"A few dollars would do it, Bob. Just a few."

"How few?"

"About fifty, Bob? Won't fifty be about right?"

"Fifty dollars is a lot for doing nothing."

"But, Bobby boy, doing nothing is precisely what a lot of people get paid for."

"How much will the blue box bring, Charley?"

"A thousand."

"How much does Taylor get?"

"Five hundred."

"I get three hundred on my end and you get a hundred. Who gets the other hundred, Charley?"

"Taylor sends it to an orphanage."

"An orphanage. What for?"

"I don't know. He claims it's an act of restitution for the evil we're doing by handling this stuff."

"Taylor is an odd duck."

"Bob."

"Yes?"

"About the fifty. You can see my point, can't you?"

"No. You're getting enough the way it is."

"Bob, there's Kate to think about. It would be messy if she found out that . . ."

"O. K., Charley. Here's your fifty. Now get out! You make me feel dirty."

"Now you're acting sensible. I'll bring your money from the blue box next week. So-long, chum!"

"Charley, before you go . . ."

"Ya?"

"Where are you taking the blue box?"

"To Taylor. Why?"

"Where? On Van Evan Street?"

"No, down at the club. Why?"

"I was just wondering what sort of journey those things take. I don't know too much about the process, you know. What does Taylor do with them?"

"He waters them down."

"I don't follow you, Charley?"

"It's simple. He has a couple of guys who throw these into a sugary syrup. Later they use the sweet stuff to make fudge out of."

"And what do they do with the fudge?"

"What do you think they do with it. They sell it, of course."

"To whom?"

"To a bunch of high school kids."

"Where?"

"All over the city . . . What is this anyway, a cross-examination?"

"No, Charley, it isn't. I just wasn't aware of how complex this thing is. I thought Taylor was peddling this stuff to older people. How much does he sell this fudge for?"

"Well, in most cases, he gets a buck a piece. Of course he doesn't sell it himself."

"He must have quite a few customers by this time."

"Well, as they say, 'He ain't doing bad.'"

"Charley, do you know what's in those pills?"

"Well . . . not really. All I know is that they fall under the title of dope."

"Those pills are Heroin pills . . . Heroin pills. Does that mean anything to you?"

"Nope, nothing. It doesn't make any difference to me whether they're Heroin pills or cough drops, as long as they bring in the cash."

"Do you know what those pills can do to young kids?"

"Sure, Bob, they give the kids a cheap jag, that's all."

"They do more than that. After you take just a little of that stuff, you feel as if you have warm milk in your veins instead of blood."

"O. K. . . so what?"

"Charley, what I'm trying to say, is that when kids get a hold of Heroin they act like animals. Besides, taking this stuff grows on them. It becomes habitual. This business is morbid. It's worse than I thought. I don't want anything more to do with it. I'm finished, absolutely finished."

"Bob, your M.D. . . . Remember?"

"To hell with my M.D. Sometimes I think a good night's sleep is worth all the M.D.'s in Chicago."

"Taylor! . . . Don't forget about Taylor. He isn't the type that you can say 'no' to."

"As far as I'm concerned, Charley, you can tell Taylor this is the last delivery. He would never have gotten anything in the first place, if I had known he was passing that garbage off to young kids. A lot of men stoop, Charley, but few crawl. Taylor can go to somebody else for his stuff."

"Bob, there isn't anybody else. You're the sole supply. You know that."

"Well, tell him to close shop and find something else to do."

"It isn't that easy, Bob. The money is quick, and the chances small. Taylor likes that kind of set-up."

"You heard what I told you before, Charley. This is the last delivery. No more pay-offs, no more stuff, no more peddling."

"Bob, I've heard you chant this tune for years now."

"I'm serious this time. Dead serious. I'm soaked with corruption and I'm weary of it . . . plain weary. Now leave me alone, will you?"

"All right, I'll leave you alone."

"Charley."

"Ya?"

"Tell Taylor what I said, and make it definite."

"Sure, I'll tell him."

"And close the door on your way out."

"O. K., Bob. Look, I'll see ya next week for the delivery."

* * * *

"Operator . . . Operator!"

"Your number, please?"

"Operator, give me Extension 9, here at the college. That's right. Laboratory Supplies."

"Hello, is this Professor Dellert? . . . Hello, Professor, this is Bob . . . Fine, thank you, sir . . . I was wondering, sir, if I could get some more concentrated Heroin for my experiments in embryology . . . Yes, its taking quite a bit . . . I can have twenty grams . . . That will be a great help, Professor. Thank you, sir!"

Reviews

THE PILLAR OF FIRE. Karl Stern. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1951.

IN *The Pillar of Fire* we see a different approach to the question of a Jew accepting Catholicism. Dr. Karl Stern, a Jewish psychiatrist, first became interested in Catholicism through his personal dissatisfaction with Judaism, and its inability to answer all his problems satisfactorily. This rather unusual presentation, which differs from that used by many other prospective converts, in which they receive their initial encouragement from a Catholic friend, affords a stimulating intellectual approach to the problem of conversion. Although the author is later helped in reaching his final goal through acquaintanceship with Catholic friends, such as the simple servant, Babette Klebl, the original idea came from within himself. And as he tells the story of his conversion, Dr. Stern interweaves a plea for a better understanding of Jews by Christians.

As a young intellectual in the Europe of the thirties, Stern came in close contact with Catholics, Protestants, Freethinkers, Nazis and Communists. In spite of this maze of parties and policies, he managed to keep his soul susceptible to the seed of truth. When Naziism finally came, his first reaction, like that of so many other Jews, was to form a deeper attachment to his religion in the face of persecution. This sense of loyalty was the greatest problem Dr. Stern had to overcome before he could accept Catholic teaching in its entirety. For he tells us that in order for a Jew to become a Christian, to admit the Messiah has come, he must not simply die to himself, but he must die as a race, since the Jewish religion is based on national ex-

clusiveness, and revelation is a national affair. To embrace the Church, therefore, Dr. Stern had to renounce his national heritage, and "this is a hard saying."

His next problem was to understand how he could enter the Church when he observed the disgraceful conduct of so many of her members. Ultimately, the question became not: "How can you enter the Church if you see how many of its members misuse it as a cloak for social injustice?" but rather, "How can you, if you have social consciousness and see the dynamite of social evolution stored in the Church, not enter it?"

Dr. Stern found the answers to these and to other less impelling questions by thoroughly studying the writings of the Church, especially those of St. Thomas and St. Augustine. Through these studies he came to realize that there is no real conflict between Christianity and Judaism: Christianity is merely the proper fulfillment of Judaism. "Only in Judaeo-Christianity do Time and Eternity meet in History."

The Pillar of Fire is a profound work. It pictures a keen scientific mind probing for truth, and upon finding that truth, having the straightforwardness to accept it. Throughout the book we find such illuminating sidelights as this:

"I should like to remark . . . that the great fault of our time is not so much woolly thinking in itself but that artificial isolation of partial aspects of wholes, when truth can be attained only by contemplating a whole."

The Pillar of Fire combines a grasp of the English idiom characteristically found in an American with the intuitive insight of an urbane European. It should be read

by Christians to better understand Jews, and by everyone to better understand the process by which Dr. Stern found the fulfillment of faith in Christianity. The story of Dr. Stern's conversion also helps disprove the idea that science and religion are incompatible, since he himself is widely recognized as an eminent psychiatrist.

Winner of the \$5,000 Christopher Award for 1950, Dr. Stern is currently a staff member of the Allan Memorial Institute at McGill University in Montreal.

WILLIAM BUGHER

THE MAGNIFICENT MacDARNEY. John D. Sheridan. New York: Pellegrini & Cudahy, 1951.

HAVE YOU EVER listened to a symphony wherein a single theme is played consistently without variation or increased animation? Did you enjoy it? If you did, then *The Magnificent MacDarney* will satisfy your taste.

It is the story of a bottle-man, a "toucher," an old man who is the village drunk, the irresponsible husband and the indifferent father. In fact, it is hardly a story at all; more precisely it is a prolonged character sketch, tied together by a few family incidents.

The general setting is Dublin but with most of the action centered in dull and poor Camelot Terrace, the home of the MacDarneys. Mrs. MacDarney is a striking contrast to her listless husband. She is religious, conscientious and hardworking. With the help of Nora, her older daughter, and of Dick, her hard-laboring son, she manages to make ends meet in a household where money is a constant problem. To ease financial worries, she rents a spare room in Camelot Terrace to two elderly bachelors. After this decision, her energies are used daily to prepare meals and beds for them.

Dan MacDarney, however, makes no contribution to his hard-pressed family. Instead he moves from saloon to saloon, begging for money and drinks. His witty tongue helps his cause and inflates his boring ego. The only time he sees his family is at meal-time and at bed-time.

To ease the monotony of a simple tale, the author has Nora dating two men. One is Michael, the timid boy next door, and the other, Bert, a dashing saxophone player. Feeling Bert is somewhat like her father, too carefree and irresponsible, she forgets him.

Chapter after chapter Dan MacDarney drinks and the rest of the family works. Their unity rests in their desire to keep Camelot Terrace together.

Mrs. MacDarney, in her great way, prays daily that her husband will change his ways. She holds the hope, a lifetime hope, that he will return to the Church and die receiving the last sacraments.

As might be expected Mrs. MacDarney, after years of hard labor, is confined to bed with a very serious heart condition. As a consequence of this turn of events, Dan goes away on a week-end retreat. Here he makes his first confession in ten years. On the way home, he is struck by a bus and killed, but not before receiving the last sacraments.

When Mrs. MacDarney hears of the consoling circumstances that preceded her husband's death she is happy. Shortly after, she dies, knowing she will meet Dan in heaven. After her mother's death, Nora marries timid Michael and Dick marries a good old-fashioned girl. The two boarders are asked to leave and Camelot Terrace comes to an end.

Repetition of character analysis and scenes is an annoying feature of this book. Here is an illustration. On page 118 Nora meets Michael and says

"... She felt as if she had kicked off

tight shoes and got into slippers."

On page 161 she tells us

"... Being with Michael was like getting out of tight shoes."

The chatter of Mrs. Ratigan, a neighbor to the MacDarney's and a gossip, is equally repetitious.

The style of writing is prosaic and dull. The antics of Dan MacDarney are nothing new. He is Falstaff done over cheaply. If the author's purpose was to create a character, he failed utterly in his attempt.

There is no artistic impact in Mr. Sheridan's book. It is dull, dull, dull, to the fullest denotation of the word. It is a novel with pages that will remain clean from disuse.

FRANK PAVALKO

THE EAR OF GOD. Patrick J. Peyton, C.S.C. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1951.

"THE FAMILY that prays together, stays together." In these few words, the work to which Father Patrick J. Peyton, C. S. C., has dedicated his entire life is summarized. His tireless efforts as the founder and leader of the Family Rosary Crusade and the Family Theatre, a weekly radio program which attempts to persuade the family to pray, has earned for him considerable praise as a promoter of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. But Father Peyton, a man of seemingly limitless energy, was not satisfied with using only the media of radio, television, and movies to fulfill his promise of spreading the prayer of the rosary. His influence also spread to the field of literature with the printing of his first book, *The Ear of God*.

This work is divided into two books, the first of which is chiefly informative. It concerns prayer, "the language of man to God," and reveals the significance of prayer as a science governed by God's princi-

ples. Father Peyton emphasizes the need for a return to faith and prayer, demonstrates the effectiveness of prayer, and helpfully explains how to pray and what to pray for.

In the latter part of the first book the author enumerates many incidents taken from his own dramatic and unusually interesting life. He tells of his apparently impossible dream of establishing the Family Rosary in every American home and his problem of tackling this dream without any idea of organization, without any special gift of speaking, without anything except a sincere and stubborn desire to get the job done — and perhaps three or four timely assists from the Mother of God. He recounts the disillusionment suffered when he tried to obtain radio time on a national hook-up and was constantly confronted with the unwelcome phrase "The rosary is bad radio"; and, after finally procuring a free half-hour from a national network, how he went about telephoning Bing Crosby and other famous stars of stage, screen, and radio to ask for their presence on his program. Why these stars consented to his pleas, the pleas of a humble priest, whose name they had never heard before, puzzled Father Peyton. It could have been nothing but the intercession of Mary, he thought. In the recounting of these "miracles" and other incidents of his life, Father Peyton writes with such vividness, and simplicity that the reader becomes absorbed.

Although the first few chapters, which express the power, necessity, and meaning of prayer are not strictly in accordance with accomplished literary styles, they are spiritually informative and are followed by a picturesque description of his life and times in America which in itself makes the book worthwhile reading.

Book Two is composed of prayers from the bible; to the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity; to the Blessed Virgin; for

a happy home; and miscellaneous prayers. These prayers increase the value of the book ten-fold because of their ready adaptability to daily use or to special occasions.

Unfortunately, however, Father Peyton's persuasive personality does not enrich his journalistic ability. Short, choppy sentences are common in the publication; making the

reading slow in some instances. His writing is also elliptical: He omits clarifications of many of his points, seemingly presuming that the reader has a previous knowledge of the subject. But from the viewpoint of inspiration, *The Ear of God* deserves high recommendation.

VINCENT BALDASSARI